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William Penn
and
Thomas B. Macaulay.

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WILLIAM PENN

AND

THOMAS B. MACAULAY:

BEING

BRIEF OBSERVATIONS ON THE CHARGES

MADE IN

MR. MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

AGAINST THE

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM PENN.

BY W. E. FORSTER.

REVISED FOR THE AMERICAN EDITION BY THE AUTHOR.

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WILLIAM PENN,

AND

T. B. MACAULAY.

The following remarks on the strictures lately made by a popular writer on the character of William Penn, were originally written as a preface to a new edition of Clarkson's Life of Penn,* but the surprise those strictures have so generally caused seems to call for the separate publication of an attempt to reply to them.

Of the nature of these charges hardly any one will be ignorant. Mr. Macaulay's "History of England" has throughout England been read and admired. Whether its accuracy will stand the test of critical inquiry the future public will decide; but there can be no question that, as a story well told and pleasant to listen to, it has bewitched the ears of the public of to-day, and that eventually it will rank, if not as an actual history, at least as a most attractive and eloquent historical romance.

In turning over its pages, so full of descriptive and oratorical power, we feel as though we were wandering through a gallery of pictures, or rather in quick succession they flit before our eyes, for the reader has no work to do—is merely required to look, not think—portraits so vivid, features so striking, that, in our admiration of the artist's talent, we care not to inquire whether they are really likenesses, true copies from nature, or merely the creations of his own fancy.

Still, when a figure comes before us such as Penn's, which we

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* Memoirs of the Public and Private Life of William Penn, by Thomas Clarkson, M. A. New edition, with a Preface, in reply to the charges made by Mr. Macaulay in his History of England, by W. E. Forster. London: Charles Gilpin, 5, Bishopsgate Street Without.

think we ought to know, we cannot but start up and ask, Can this mean and repulsive countenance, in real truth, belong to one whom we have so long been accustomed to regard with respect, we may almost say with reverence?

For the page of our history is not so rich in illustrations of nobility and worth, that we can afford to barter away any one of them, not even in exchange for all the fine pictures of Mr. Macaulay; and if his portrait of Penn be in truth a caricature, the talent of the painter makes it all the more necessary to attempt to prove that it is not a likeness.

That it is not the portrait by which Penn is generally known, Mr. Macaulay himself allows:—"To speak the whole truth concerning him," he says, in his brief sketch, at the first mention of his name, "is a task which requires some courage; for he is "rather a mythical than a historical person. Rival nations and "hostile sects have agreed in canonizing him. England is proud "of his name. A great commonwealth beyond the Atlantic regards him with a reverence similar to that which the Athenians felt for Theseus, and the Romans for Quirinus. The respectable society of which he was a member honours him as "an apostle. By pious men of other persuasions he is generally "regarded as a bright pattern of Christian virtue. Meanwhile "admirers of a very different sort have sounded his praises. "The French philosophers of the eighteenth century pardoned "what they regarded as his superstitious fancies in consideration "of his contempt for priests, and of his cosmopolitan benevolence, "impartially extended to all races and to all creeds. His name "has thus become, throughout all civilised countries, a synonyme "for probity and philanthropy."*

But is not this verdict of posterity, so unanimous and so favourable, which the historian thus records, not because he agrees with it, but rather to enhance his own valour in daring to dispute it, in itself, by the very fact of its existence, strong argument in behalf of its own truthfulness? for man is not so prodigal of praise as to bestow it on his fellow without a reason. If a reputation outlives the power of its possessor, there is good ground to believe it is the reward of his deeds. Time tests us by what

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 507. The *first* edition of Macaulay is the edition referred to throughout this pamphlet.

we are, not seem to be: only the fruitful plant escapes its scythe; the weed, however rank, is relentlessly mown down. Many a world-wide renown follows its owner to the grave; the bubble bursts when the breath leaves him who has blown it; but it is hard to find an instance in which after ages have wasted honour on the worthless—lavished laurels where contempt would have been fitting. Posterity pays rather than gives—is just more than generous. A man who was persecuted during his lifetime, *then* slandered and hated by not a few, but who, now that almost two centuries have elapsed, is thus honoured and revered by all creeds and parties, may perchance be what Mr. Macaulay chooses to term a "mythical person," but if so, there is at least a meaning in the myth, for in fact no myth can be formed out of a falsehood; the very condition of its existence is that there must be truth and worth in its subject: it is only the heroes of history whom she deigns to clothe with a mythical garment; the halo, however misty, proves that within must shine a light.

Mr. Macaulay, however, it is plain, does not believe in Penn, not even as the subject of a myth. He is a historical sceptic, or at best a rationalist. See how ingeniously he tries to undermine the fabric of this mythical renown:—"Nor is this reputation," he adds, "altogether unmerited. Penn was without doubt a man "of eminent virtues. He had a strong sense of religious duty, "and a fervent desire to promote the happiness of mankind. On "one or two points of high importance he had notions more cor- "rect than were in his day common, even among men of enlarged "minds; and, as the proprietor and legislator of a province, "which, being almost uninhabited when it came into his posses- "sion, afforded a clear field for moral experiments, he had the "rare good fortune of being able to carry his theories into prac- "tice without any compromise, and yet without any shock to "existing institutions. He will always be mentioned with honour "as the founder of a colony, who did not, in his dealings with a "savage people, abuse the strength derived from civilisation, and "as a lawgiver, who, in an age of persecution, made religious "liberty the corner-stone of a polity. But his writings and his "life furnish abundant proofs that he was not a man of strong "sense. He had no skill in reading the characters of others. "His confidence in persons less virtuous than himself led him

"into great errors and misfortunes. His enthusiasm for one "great principle sometimes impelled him to violate other great "principles which he ought to have held sacred. Nor was his "integrity altogether proof against the temptations to which it "was exposed in that splendid and polite, but deeply corrupted "society, with which he now mingled. The whole court was in "a ferment with intrigues of gallantry and intrigues of ambition. "The traffic in honours, places, and pardons was incessant. It "was natural that a man who was daily seen at the palace, and "who was known to have free access to majesty, should be fre- "quently importuned to use his influence for purposes which a "rigid morality must condemn. The integrity of Penn had stood "firm against obloquy and persecution. But now, attacked by "royal smiles, by female blandishments, by the insinuating elo- "quence and delicate flattery of veteran diplomatists and cour- "tiers, his resolution began to give way. Titles and phrases "against which he had often borne his testimony dropped occa- "sionally from his lips and his pen. It would be well if he had "been guilty of nothing worse than such compliances with the "fashions of the world. Unhappily it cannot be concealed that "he bore a chief part in some transactions condemned, not merely "by the rigid code of the society to which he belonged, but by "the general sense of all honest men. He afterwards solemnly "protested that his hands were pure from illicit gain, and that "he never received any gratuity from those whom he had obliged, "though he might easily, while his influence at court lasted, have "made a hundred and twenty thousand pounds. To this asser- "tion full credit is due. But bribes may be offered to vanity as "well as to cupidity, and it is impossible to deny that Penn was "cajoled into bearing a part in some unjustifiable transactions, "of which others enjoyed the profits."*

It is difficult not to admire the skill with which, in this passage, the writer glides from praise to contempt, ingeniously giving the impression that the praise is but in complaisance to the probable prejudices of his reader, the blame his own courageous conviction; and yet, if the two opinions be contrasted together, they can hardly, all allowance being given for the inconsistency of human nature, be made to fit. "A sense of religious duty" can

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 508.

scarcely be called "strong" which does not save its possessor from "transactions condemned by the sense of all honest men," even though "bribes be offered to his vanity;" and it is strange that one "whose life furnishes abundant proof that he was not a "man of strong sense" should not only have "notions on points "of high importance more correct than were in his day common "even among men of enlarged minds," but should be "able to "carry his theories into practice," and practice so successful that "he will always," excepting of course by Mr. Macaulay, "be mentioned with honour."

But leaving for the present this preliminary sketch, which, consisting merely of assertion without attempt at proof, does not indeed of itself need notice, except as evidence of the animus of its author, we must pass on to the special charges upon which this general character appears to be grounded.

The first charge is in connexion with the infamous profit to which the maids of honour of James's court succeeded in turning Monmouth's rebellion, by the bargain which they drove with the friends of the young girls of Taunton, who, in the Duke's march through that town, had presented him with a standard. Mr. Macaulay's statement is as follows. After mentioning the thousand guineas which the Queen Mary of Modena had cleared on a cargo of rebels sentenced to be transported, he adds:—"We "cannot wonder that her attendants should have imitated her "unprincely greediness and her unwomanly cruelty. They ex-"acted a thousand pounds from Roger Hoare, a merchant of "Bridgewater, who had contributed to the military chest of the "rebel army. But the prey on which they pounced most eagerly "was one which it might have been thought that even the most "ungentle natures would have spared. Already some of the girls "who had presented the standard to Monmouth at Taunton had "cruelly expiated their offence. * * * Most of the "young ladies, however, who had walked in the procession were "still alive. Some of them were under ten years of age. All "had acted under the orders of their schoolmistress, without "knowing that they were committing a crime. The Queen's "maids of honour asked the royal permission to wring money "out of the parents of the poor children; and the permission was "granted. An order was sent down to Taunton that all these

"little girls should be seized and imprisoned. Sir Francis Warre, "of Hestercombe, the Tory member for Bridgewater, was re- "quested to undertake the office of exacting the ransom. He "was charged to declare in strong language that the maids of "honour would not endure delay, that they were determined to "prosecute to outlawry, unless a reasonable sum were forth- "coming, and that by a reasonable sum was meant seven thou- "sand pounds. Warre excused himself from taking any part in "a transaction so scandalous. The maids of honour then re- "quested William Penn to act for them; and Penn accepted the "commission. Yet it should seem that a little of the pertinacious "scrupulosity which he had often shown about taking off his hat "would not have been altogether out of place on this occasion. "He probably silenced the remonstrances of his conscience by "repeating to himself that none of the money which he extorted "would go into his own pocket; that if he refused to be the agent "of the ladies they would find agents less humane; that by com- "plying he should increase his influence at the court; and that "his influence at the court had already enabled him, and might "still enable him, to render great services to his oppressed breth- "ren. The maids of honour were at last forced to content them- "selves with less than a third part of what they had demanded."*

This is the story, and one disclosing more contemptible cruelty it is scarcely possible to imagine. Innocent girls, whose sole offence was obedience to the orders of their mistress, thrown into a dungeon in order that maids of honour may exact a ransom for their liberty—the scrupulous Quaker acting as broker in this vile speculation, accepting the commission which the Tory cavalier had refused: if this story be as he tells it, Mr. Macaulay may well say that Penn's integrity was no proof against "female blandishment." A transaction so mean, so hypocritical, would indeed deserve the opprobrium "of all honest men." No defence could be attempted of a deed which no possible motive could justify, and the reader could only wonder what can be Mr. Macaulay's definition of the "religious duty," with "a strong sense" of which he declares its perpetrator to have been endued.

Doubtless the charge is bad enough, but now what are the proofs?

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 656.

The only one of the authorities Mr. Macaulay quotes in reference to this case, in which there is any allusion to Penn, is the following letter from the Earl of Sunderland, the then Home Secretary, a copy of which is in the State Paper Office:—

"*Whitehall, Febry.* 13*th*, 1685–6,

"Mr. Penne—Her Maj^ties Maids of Honour having acquainted me, that they designe to employ you and Mr. Walden in making a composition with the Relations of the Maids of Taunton for the high Misdemeanor they have been guilty of, I do at their request hereby let you know that her Maj^ty has been pleased to give their Fines to the said maids of Honor, and therefore recommend it to Mr. Walden and you to make the most advantageous composition you can in their behalfe.

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"Sunderland P."*

This letter, to which no reply can be found either in the State Paper Office or elsewhere, is the sole proof upon which the charge is grounded: there exists no collateral evidence whatever confirming its receipt by Penn, much less his acceptance of its commission: it is not even certain that it was addressed to him. The address in the State Paper Office is not "William Penn, Esq.," nor William Penn at all, but plain *Mr. Penne*, and therefore it is quite possible that it was intended for a certain "George Penne,"† who it appears was instrumental in effecting the release from slavery of a Mr. Azariah Pinney, a gentleman of Bettescombe, near Crewkerne, in Somersetshire, whose sentence to death had been commuted to transportation.‡

But allowing that Sunderland's letter was addressed to William Penn, what does it prove? Not that he undertook the office in question, but merely that "the maids of honour having acquainted" the Secretary "that they designed to employ him and "a Mr. Walden, he therefore recommended it to Mr. Walden and "to him to make the most advantageous composition they can in "their behalf."

Mark, Sunderland rests his recommendation not on any pre-

* State Paper Office. Letter Book, 1679–1688. Domestic Various. No. 629, p. 324.

† Possibly the same G. Pen mentioned by Pepys in his "Diary," April 4, 1660.

‡ See Robert's Life of Monmouth (vol. ii. p. 243,) whose authority is family letters in the possession of Mr. Pinney's descendants.

vious communication between himself and Penn, nor between Penn and the maids of honour, but merely on their "design to employ" him and another; how then can we tell that Penn was even privy to such design? The case of the Taunton maids excited no little interest both at the time and since, but neither in the official documents connected therewith, nor in any general history, nor in the local records, is there any other allusion to Penn, nor is there any mention whatever of the matter in either his own letters or biography.

Surely then, even on his own authority, Mr. Macaulay's positive assertion that "the maids of honour requested William Penn "to act for them," and that he "accepted the commission," is an unwarrantable assumption.

There is, however, one historian, and that too a contemporary, almost an eye-witness, by whom this assertion is not confirmed but contradicted. Oldmixon, in his History, gives the following account of the transaction:—"The Court was so unmerciful, that "they excepted the poor girls of Taunton, who gave Monmouth "colours, out of their pretended pardon, and every one of them "was forced to pay as much money as would have been a good "portion to each for particular pardons. This money, and a "great deal more, was said to be for the maids of honour, *whose "agent Brent, the Popish lawyer, had an under agent, one Crane "of Bridgewater*, and 'tis supposed that both of them paid themselves very bountifully out of the money which was raised by "this means, some instances of which are within my knowledge."* Now, though it may be alleged that Oldmixon is by no means an infallible guide, not bearing a very high character for accuracy, yet in a case like this, some of the circumstances of which he declares to have been "within his own knowledge," which may be well believed, seeing he was, as Mr. Macaulay says, when quoting him in reference to Monmouth's entrance into Taunton, "then a boy living very near the scene of these events,"† in fact at Bridgewater itself,‡ so that he was Crane's fellow-townsman, his testimony would at least seem worthy of notice.

* Oldmixon, vol. ii. p. 708.

† Macaulay, vol. i. p. 580. Also Mackintosh's History of the Revolution, pp. 13, 21, 24.

‡ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 612.

Moreover, Penn having been his personal acquaintance,* had he really acted as broker in this business, Oldmixon could scarcely have been ignorant of the fact. Still, strange as it may seem, Mr. Macaulay, who often quotes† him, in one case by himself,‡ and even gives him as an authority§ in an earlier part of this very story of the Taunton maids, completely passes him by, when his evidence would thus disturb his hypothesis of Penn's hypocrisy. This account also has some slight collateral support, which Mr. Macaulay's has not, for we find, from a petition in the State Paper Office from one suspected of having been engaged in the rebellion, endorsed Brent, and also from a passage in the second Lord Clarendon's Diary, wherein he says that a "Lady "Tipping had offered Mr. Brent £200 to get a *noli prosequi*,"‖ that "this vile wretch," as Oldmixon¶ calls him, was an acknowledged pardon-broker, and therefore a very probable agent for these maids of honour to employ. Again, the wording of the warrant, dated March 11, 1686–7, is worth attention. It states, that it is "his Majesty's pleasure that these maids, or their rela-"tions and friends, who have compounded or shall compound, "with the *agent* employed by her Majesty's said maids of honour, "shall not,"** &c. The word *agent* is applicable enough to Oldmixon's version, viz., that Brent was the agent of the maids of honour and Crane merely his sub-agent, but if Sunderland's recommendation had been carried out, and both Penn and Walden employed, the plural number would probably have been used.

But granting, which we think the reader will hardly be disposed to do, that Brent's agency is an invention of Oldmixon, and Penn's interference is proved, even then, as is stated by a previous historian,†† "the transaction presents two phases," and Penn might doubtless have "thought not of the lucre of the traf-"fickers, but of the mercy which they sold." In our utter igno-

* Oldmixon's Account of British Colonies, printed 1708; quoted in Proud's History of Pennsylvania, vol. i. pp. 244–486.

† Macaulay, vol. i. pp. 588, 596, 602–4–5, 635, &c.

‡ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 593.

§ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 586.

‖ Clarendon's Diary, March 19, 1687–8.

¶ Oldmixon, p. 708.

** State Paper Warrant Office Book, ii. 219.

†† Roberts, vol. ii. p. 241.

rance of all the circumstances which preceded his interference, allowing he did interfere, why should we not suppose that the relations of the girls, who it must be remembered had been seized and their ransom allotted before the date of Sunderland's letter, had applied to Penn as a man of influence, honesty, and benevolence, to intercede in their behalf, and that the Secretary's commission was in consequence of such application, and the diminution of the ransom "to less than one-third of the original demand"* his reward for his trouble. This view of the matter Mr. Roberts, the writer above quoted, we observe takes, and though also an assumption, it is no ways more gratuitous than Mr. Macaulay's, and has at least the advantage of being in accordance with Penn's general character. In one expression which he uses, Mr. Macaulay seems himself to lean to this interpretation, when he states that the Quaker probably "silenced the remonstrances of "his conscience by repeating to himself that if he refused to be "the agent they would find others less humane," but in this case he would not have designated the commission which he says Penn accepted as a "scandalous transaction," nor called it an "office of exacting ransom." These terms, together with his previous remarks, show clearly enough that he chooses to consider Penn as having been, not an intercessor for mercy, but an abettor of cruelty, pandering to oppression in order that his vanity might be pampered.

Possibly Mr. Macaulay may conceive that no one, not even a Quaker, gifted with "a strong sense of religious duty," can withstand the "blandishments" of a maid of honour, but at least he should have satisfied himself that these blandishments were used, before he gives this least probable—this most uncharitable interpretation of a fact, which, though asserted by himself as undoubted, is in itself most doubtful, contradicted by the testimony of a competent contemporary—the sole evidence in support of which is a commission which we can not be sure was addressed to, and which we have no reason to believe was accepted by, the party whom he accuses.

If by "mythical" Mr. Macaulay means fabulous, distorted, exaggerated, it is now easy to understand why he calls Penn a

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 656.

"mythical person." He would indeed be such if his character depended on his description; for assertions thus established, deductions thus inferred, may make up a romance, or, if men choose to believe them, even constitute a myth, but can scarcely claim the title of history.

Dismissing the maids of honour, the next mention of Penn by Mr. Macaulay, and therefore the next insinuation against his character, for he never, after the first introduction of his name, alludes to him except disparagingly, is in his description of the legal murders of Gaunt and Cornish. The manner in which he describes Penn's presence at these executions, "for whom," he says, "exhibitions which humane men generally avoid seem to "have had strong attraction,"* affords a striking instance of his unaccountable determination to give the worst possible colour to every one of his acts. He seems to suppose that his motive must have been, like Selwyn's, a passion for seeing hanging, or at best an idle curiosity. Clarkson's remarks and quotations from Burnet, who notoriously disliked him, show that it was much more probably a wish to be able to make a true report, and therefore an effective remonstrance to the King; and enable us to pass on to another charge, upon which also it is not needful to dwell, for though a direct, it is by no means a dangerous attack, Mr. Macaulay himself providing the defence, the statement he makes in his text being contradicted by the authority he quotes in its margin. In his description of the efforts which James made, towards the end of his reign, to win the aid of the Dissenters in his struggles, he gives the case of Kiffin, a London Baptist, of high influence, both from his wealth and worth. Two of Kiffin's grandsons had been executed, or rather murdered, by sentence of the Bloody Assizes; no wonder, therefore, that, justly regarding the King with personal as well as political abhorrence, he wished to decline the alderman's gown, which was offered to him to secure his support.

While his acceptance of this office was in suspense (for though Mr. Macaulay gives the impression that Kiffin did not accept it, his own Memoirs state distinctly that, after six weeks' consideration, he did), "Penn," says Mr Macaulay, "was employed in "the work of seduction, but to no purpose."†

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 665. † Macaulay, vol. ii. p. 230.

At the foot of the page containing this sentence are two references, viz., "Kiffin's Memoirs," and "Luson's Letter to Brooke." In the letter there is no allusion to Penn, but in the Memoirs we find the following:—"In a little after a great temptation attended "me, which was a commission from the King to be one of the "aldermen of the city of London, which, as soon as I heard of "it, I used all the means I could to be excused, both by some "lords near the King, and also by Sir Nicholas Butler and Mr. "Penn."* The prejudice, for we can really find no better word, must indeed be powerful, which can thus induce an historian to pervert Kiffin's acknowledgment that he made use of Penn to get excused into a proof that "Penn was employed by the King in "the work of seduction."

The accusation which must now be noticed is one which will require a more detailed examination. The Quaker is again represented as acting the base part of a political pimp, but the object of the King is not now merely the gain of the vote and interest of one London alderman, though a Baptist to boot, but the delivery of the fair foundation of Magdalen College, with all its rich lands, into the arms of the greedy Jesuits. In order, however, to form a just judgment of Penn's conduct in this matter, the story of the case, up to the time of his interference, must, though well known, be briefly recapitulated.

In March, 1687, the President of Magdalen College died; the King, not satisfied with having secured University and Christ Church Colleges for the Roman Catholics, seized this opportunity to spread the sway of his faith, and sent down letters mandatory to the fellows, recommending them to elect to the vacant place one Antony Farmer, a notorious libertine, but as a renegade Papist a fit man to serve the purpose of the Court, though therefore all the more odious to the members of the College. By the statutes of the foundation the right of election rested with the fellows, but in case the Court proposed a candidate duly qualified, it had not been unusual to accept its nomination. Against such an appointment as this, however, the fellows protested, most reasonably, but in vain, and at length, having postponed as long as possible the election, in the fruitless hope that some attention would be paid to their protest, they appointed, on the 15th of

* Kiffin's Memoirs, edited by Orme, p. 84.

April, Dr. Hough, a divine, whom Mr. Macaulay justly describes as "a man of eminent virtue and prudence." At this act, by which, while vindicating their rights, they defied the Royal wish, James was, as might be expected, greatly enraged: accordingly, in June, the fellows were cited to appear before the High Commission, by whom Hough's election was annulled; but abundant proof having been given of Farmer's vicious habits, his name was silently dropped as too disgraceful to press, and fresh letters mandatory were sent down in August, ordering the fellows forthwith to choose as their President, Parker, the Bishop of Oxford.

Parker, though not an avowed was a suspected Papist, and, as such, and as a well-known partisan of the Papist party, most distasteful to the fellows, who, fortunately for the expression of their dislike, were able to rest their opposition to his appointment on two valid legal objections. Hough was their duly elected President; their oath, therefore, bound them to support him; and even had the Presidency been vacant, they were sworn to appoint a fellow of either New College or Magdalen, neither of which conditions Parker fulfilled. On these grounds, therefore, they respectfully declined to obey the King's order, stating they could not without perjuring themselves. Thus far had the dispute proceeded, when, on the 3d of September, James, in the course of his progress, arrived at Oxford. On the day after his arrival he sent for the disobedient fellows, they tendered him a petition, he refused to accept it, and in great wrath ordered them to be "gone to their home" — that instant "to repair to their "chapel," and as they feared "the weight of his hand," "elect "the Bishop of Oxford."* To their chapel they retired, to consult whether they should obey their Sovereign or abide by their oath, and to their lasting honour they boldly resolved to do the latter.

At this stage of the conflict Penn for the first time appears on the field, and it will now be necessary to quote Mr. Macaulay, at full length, in doing which it may be well to put side by side with his account that contained in Wilmot's Life of Hough, from which he probably obtained his information. The word *probably* is used, because, as Mr. Macaulay quotes no reference in his story of Penn's interference, it is impossible to define with cer-

* Wilmot's Life of Hough, p. 15.

tainty the authorities on which he grounds it; but though the Life of Hough is not in the list of authors which at the end of his report of the Magdalen College case he gives *en masse*, leaving his reader to allot as he best can the special circumstances to each, still as it is evident, from his text, that he consulted this work, and as, moreover, it contains a statement impartial, or, if biassed at all, certainly against Penn, and the only one professing to be a complete relation of the facts, its comparison with Mr. Macaulay will show how far he is justified in his assertions.

One remark, however, is needed before making these quotations. By a mode of lumping facts, which, though with most historians it would be accounted strange, is by no means rare with Mr. Macaulay, whose artistic fancy not unfrequently induces him to sacrifice accuracy of perspective in his pictures to *effect* in the grouping of his figures, he manages to give the impression that the transaction he describes was one incident, or at least an unbroken series of events, instead of comprising, as was the case, three distinct incidents occupying altogether a space of more than a month. In order, therefore, fairly to test, or in fact to understand his narrative, it will be needful to follow the example of a previous critic,* and to divide it into three distinct parts; and if, in so doing, it be objected that sentences which are intended to apply to one occurrence are quoted as referring to another, all that can be said is, that every care has been taken to apportion the descriptions to those circumstances to which they appear to be least inapplicable:—

MACAULAY.†

"The King, greatly incensed and mortified by his defeat," (viz., the refusal of the fellows to admit Parker as their President,) "quitted Oxford and rejoined the Queen at Bath. His obstinacy and violence had brought him into an embarrassing position. He had trusted too much to the effect of his frowns and angry tones, and had rashly staked not only the credit of his administration, but his per-

WILMOT'S LIFE OF HOUGH.‡

"It appears, from Anthony a Wood's account of this visit," (viz., the King's visit to Oxford,) "that W. Penn, who attended the King to Oxford, went afterwards to Magdalen College; and although he at first hoped to persuade the fellows to comply with the King's wishes, yet, when he heard the statement of their case, he was satisfied that they could not comply without a breach of their

* Tablet, March 10, 1849.

† Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 298.

‡ Wilmot's Life of Hough, p. 15.

sonal dignity, on the issue of the contest. Could he yield to subjects whom he had menaced with raised voice and furious gestures? Yet could he venture to eject in one day a crowd of respectable clergymen from their homes because they had discharged what the whole nation regarded as a sacred duty? Perhaps there might be an escape from this dilemma. Perhaps the College might still be terrified, caressed, or bribed into submission. The agency of Penn was employed. He had too much good feeling to approve of the unjust and violent measures of the government, and even ventured to express part of what he thought. James was, as usual, obstinate in the wrong."

oaths. This account is confirmed by some original letters now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, from Dr. Sykes and Mr. Creech to Dr. Charlett, of the 6th, 7th, and 9th of September, 1687, in which, after giving exactly the same account of the King's reception and treatment of the fellows, they both state that Mr. Penn went afterwards to Magdalen College, and having had some conference with the fellows, wrote a letter to the King in their behalf, observing 'that their case was hard; that in their circumstances they could not yield without a breach of their oaths; and that such mandates were a force upon conscience, and not agreeable to the King's other gracious indulgences.' "

This interview of Penn with the fellows must have occurred between the 3d of September, the day of the King's arrival at Oxford, and the 9th of the same month, the date of the last of the letters referred to by Wilmot. Some time afterwards, on what exact day is not known, but probably about the end of the month, an anonymous letter was received by Dr. Thomas Bailey, one of the fellows, which he chose to attribute to Penn, to whom he sent a reply, on which two epistles Mr. Macaulay rests the following declamation, or at least must be supposed to rest it, all other authority being utterly wanting:—

MACAULAY.*

"The courtly Quaker therefore did his best to seduce the College from the path of right. He first tried intimidation. Ruin he said impended over the society. The King was highly incensed. The case might be a hard one. Most people thought it so. But every child knew that his Majesty loved to have his own way, and could not bear to be thwarted. Penn,

WILMOT.†

"It was now rumoured that the King had issued an order to proceed against the College by a writ of *Quo Warranto*, but however this was, the fellows appear to have listened to an application made to Dr. Thomas Bailey, one of the senior fellows, from William Penn, who was said to be in great favour at that time with the King, and had written to the Doctor" a let-

* Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 298.

† Wilmot, p. 18.

therefore, exhorted the fellows not to rely upon the goodness of their cause, but to submit, or at least to temporise. Such counsel came strangely from one who had himself been expelled from the University for raising a riot about the surplice, who had run the risk of being disinherited rather than take off his hat to the princes of the blood, and had been more than once sent to prison for preaching at conventicles. He did not succeed in frightening the Magdalen men. In answer to his alarming hints he was reminded that in the last generation thirty-four out of the forty fellows had cheerfully left their beloved cloisters and gardens, their hall and their chapel, and had gone forth, not knowing where they should find a meal or a bed, rather than violate the oath of allegiance. The King now wished them to violate another oath. He should find that the old spirit was not extinct."

ter, of which the following is a copy:*

"A COPY OF A LETTER DIRECTED TO DR. BAYLEY, FELLOW OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXON, SUPPOSED TO BE WRIT BY MR. WILLIAM PENN.

"SIR,—Upon an inquiry made of your present fellows of Magdalen College, I am informed that you are a person eminent in that learned body, for your temper, prudence, and good conduct in affairs, and therefore very fit to be addressed to by me, who do not send you this to trepan you and your brethren, but out of a passionate concern for your interest; to persuade you either to a compliance with his Majesty's letters mandatory, or to think among yourselves of some expedient to prevent the ruin of your College and yourselves; and to offer it to his Majesty's royal consideration, that the order for the *Quo Warranto* against the College may be recalled, before it be too late; for you cannot but be sensible how highly his Majesty is incensed against you, neither can you give one instance whether ever that sort of proceeding was judged against the Crown. Your cause most think it very hard; but you are not in prudence to rely on the goodness of your cause, but to do what the present instance of affairs will permit, and in patience to expect a season that will be more auspicious to persons of your character. Every mechanic knows the temper of his present Majesty, who never will receive a baffle in anything that he heartily espouseth;

* Quotations only from this letter are given in Wilmot, but the reader will understand it better if he read it all, and it is therefore given above in full, as printed in the State Trials, vol. iv., p. 270.

and that he doth this, yourselves have had too late and manifest an instance to doubt of his zeal in the affair.

"Where there are so many statutes to be observed, it is impossible but some must be broken at one time or another; and I am informed by the learned of the law, that a failure in any one point forfeits your grant, and lays your College open to the Royal disposal.

"I could give many other prudent arguments that might possibly incline you to a speedy endeavour of putting an end to your troubles almost at any rate; but I shall suggest this one thing to you, that your fatal overthrow would be a fair beginning of so much aimed at reformation, first of the University, then of the Church, and administer such an opportunity to the enemy as may perhaps not occur in his Majesty's reign.

"Your affectionate servant, &c.

"There was no signature to this letter, but, from what passed afterwards, there is every reason to believe that it was written by William Penn, to whom it was ascribed.

"Dr. Bailey returned a long and argumentative answer to this letter, on the 3d of October, directed to Mr. Penn, in which he says, 'The paper enclosed is a copy of a letter, which, by the charitable purpose of it, seems to be written by you, who have been already so kind as to appear in our behalf, and are reported by all who know you to employ much of your time in doing good to mankind, and using your credit with his Majesty to undeceive him in any wrong impressions given him of his conscientious subjects, and, where his justice and goodness have been thereby abused, to reconcile the

persons injured to his Majesty's favour, and secure them by it from oppression and prejudice. In this confidence, I presume to make this application to you, desiring your excuse for not subscribing it; for if you did write the letter, you know to whom it was directed; and if you did not, I hope your charity will induce you to make such use of your light you have by it into the affairs of our College, as to mediate for us with his Majesty to be restored to his good opinion, as the only thing which is desired by us, who are zealous, above all earthly things, for his felicity and glory."

What reply Penn sent to Bailey's letter, or whether he sent any, is not known, but very soon after this,* "viz., on the 9th of "October, a deputation from the College, of which Dr. Hough "was one, had a conference with Mr. Penn at Windsor, where "the Court at that time was held," which is described by Dr. Hough in the following letter to a relation, a copy of which is among the MSS. of the British Museum, and paraphrased by Mr. Macaulay as follows:—

MACAULAY.†

"Then Penn tried a gentler tone. He had an interview with Hough and with some of the fellows, and, after many professions of sympathy and friendship, began to hint at a compromise. The King could not bear to be crossed. The College must give way. Parker must be admitted. But he was in very bad health. As his preferments would soon be vacant, 'Doctor Hough,' said Penn, 'may then be Bishop of Oxford. How should you like that, gentlemen?' Penn had passed his life in declaiming against a hireling ministry. He held that he was bound to refuse the payment of tithes, and this

WILMOT.‡ (Hough's Letter.)

"*October the 9th, at night.*

"DEAR COUSIN,—I gave you a short account of what passed at Windsor this morning; but having the convenience of sending this by Mr. Charlett, I fancy you will be well enough satisfied to hear our discourse with Mr. Penn more at large.

"He was in all about three hours in our company, and at his first coming in, he began with the great concern he had for the welfare of our College, the many efforts he had made to reconcile us to the King, and the great sincerity of his intentions and actions; that he

* Wilmot, p. 22 † Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 299. ‡ Wilmot, pp. 25 to 30.

even when he had bought land chargeable with tithes, and had been allowed the value of the tithes in the purchase money. According to his own principles, he would have committed a great sin if he had interfered for the purpose of obtaining a benefice on the most honourable terms for the most pious divine. Yet to such a degree had his manners been corrupted by evil communications, and his understanding obscured by inordinate zeal for a single object, that he did not scruple to become a broker in simony of a peculiarly discreditable kind, and to use a bishopric as a bait to tempt a divine to perjury. Hough replied with civil contempt that he wanted nothing from the Crown but common justice. 'We stand,' he said, 'on our statutes and our oaths; but, even setting aside our statutes and oaths, we feel that we have our religion to defend. The Papists have robbed us of Christ Church. The fight is now for Magdalen. They will soon have all the rest.'

"Penn was foolish enough to answer that he really believed that the Papists would now be content. 'University,' he said, 'is a pleasant college. Christ Church is a noble place. Magdalen is a fine building. The situation is convenient. The walks by the river are delightful. If the Roman Catholics are reasonable, they will be satisfied with these.' This absurd avowal would alone have made it impossible for Hough and his brethren to yield. The negotiation was broken off, and the King hastened to make the disobedient know, as he had threatened, what it was to incur his displeasure."

thought nothing in this world was worth a trick, or any thing sufficient to justify collusion or deceitful artifice, and this he insisted so long upon, that I easily perceived he expected something of a compliment, by way of assent, should be returned; and therefore, though I had much ado to bring it out, I told him that whatever others might conceive of him, he might be assured we depended upon his sincerity, otherwise we would never have given ourselves the trouble to come thither to meet him.

"He then gave an historical account, in short, of his acquaintance with the King; assured us it was not Popery but Property that first began it; that however people were pleased to call him Papist, he declared to us that he was a dissenting Protestant; that he dissented from Papists in almost all those points wherein we differ from them, and many wherein we and they are agreed.

"After this we came to the College again. He wished with all his heart that he had sooner concerned himself in it, but he was afraid that he had now come too late; however, he would use his endeavours, and if they were unsuccessful, we must refer it to want of power, not of good will, to serve us. I told him I thought the most effectual way would be to give his Majesty a true state of the case, which I had reason to suspect he had never yet received; and therefore I offered him some papers for his instruction, whereof one was a copy of our first petition before the election, another was our letter to the Duke of Ormond and the state of our case; a third was that petition which our society had offered to his Majesty here at

Oxford; and a fourth was that sent after the King to Bath. He seemed to read them very attentively, and after many objections, (to which he owned I gave him satisfactory answers,) he promised faithfully to read every word to the King, unless he was peremptorily commanded to forbear. He was very solicitous to clear Lord Sunderland of suspicion, and threw the odium upon the Chancellor, which I think I told you in the morning, and which makes me think there is little good to be hoped for from him.

"He said the measures now resolved upon were such as the King thought would take effect; but he said he knew nothing in particular, nor did he give the least light, or let fall any thing wherein we might so much as ground a conjecture, nor did he so much as hint at the letter which was sent to him.

"I thank God he did not so much as offer at any proposal by way of accommodation, which was the thing I most dreaded; only once, upon the mention of the Bishop of Oxford's indisposition, he said, smiling, 'If the Bishop of Oxford die, Dr. Hough may be made Bishop. What think you of that, gentlemen?' Mr. Cradock answered, 'they should be heartily glad of it, for it would do very well with the Presidentship.' But I told him seriously, I had no ambition above the post in which I was, and that having never been conscious to myself of any disloyalty towards my Prince, I could not but wonder what it was should make me so much more incapable of serving his Majesty in it than those whom he had been pleased to recommend.' He said, Majesty did not love to be thwarted; and

after so long a dispute we could not expect to be restored to the King's favour without making some concessions.' I told him, 'that we were ready to make all that were consistent with honesty and conscience;' but many things might have been said upon that subject, which I did not then think proper to mention. 'However,' said I, 'Mr. Penn, in this I will be plain with you. We have our statutes and oaths to justify us in all that we have done hitherto; but setting this aside, we have a religion to defend, and I suppose yourself would think us knaves if we should tamely give it up. The Papists have already gotten Christ Church and University; the present struggle is for Magdalen; and in a short time they threaten they will have the rest.' He replied with vehemence, 'That they shall never have, assure yourselves; if once they proceed so far, they will quickly find themselves destitute of their present assistance. For my part, I have always declared my opinion that the preferments of the Church should not be put into any other hands but such as they at present are in; but I hope you would not have the two Universities such invincible bulwarks for the Church of England, that none but they must be capable of giving their children a learned education. I suppose two or three colleges will content the Papists: Christ Church is a noble structure, University is a pleasant place, and Magdalen College is a comely building. The walks are pleasant, and it is conveniently situated just at the entrance of the town,' &c. &c. When I heard him talk at this rate, I concluded he was either off his guard, or had a mind to droll upon us 'However,' I re-

plied, 'when they had ours, they would take the rest, as they and the present possessors could never agree.' In short, I see it is resolved that the Papists must have our College; and I think all we have to do, is, to let the world see that they TAKE it from us, and that we do not GIVE it up.

"I count it great good fortune that so many were present at this discourse (whereof I have not told you a sixth part, but I think the most considerable); for otherwise I doubt this last passage would have been suspected as if to heighten their courage through despair. But there was not a word said in private, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Cradock, and Mr. Young, being present all the time.

"Give my most humble service to Sir Thomas Powell and Mrs. Powell.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your very affectionate and
"faithful Servant,
"J. H."

With this interview ended, so far as history informs us, Penn's interference.

The disagreement between the two narratives above quoted is almost too evident to need remark, but it may be worth while to recapitulate Mr. Macaulay's perversions and omissions.

First, as regards Penn's earliest share in the business, viz., his conference with the fellows at Oxford, Mr. Macaulay says, "Penn's agency was employed." None of Wilmot's authorities, neither Anthony a Wood, nor Sykes'* and Creech's letters, mention any employment; they merely state that, after the King had met the fellows, Penn went to Magdalen College, but whether at the instigation of the Court or of his own feelings they do not add. His object may, as has been well stated, have been "either "to save the King from his dilemma or the College from its "peril."* The imputation of either motive is an assumption,

* Tablet, March 10th, 1849.

but Mr. Macaulay's positive assertion that he was employed is certainly unwarranted.

But Mr. Macaulay assumes much more than the fact of agency; he asserts not only that Penn was employed, but employed in order to "terrify, caress, or bribe the College into sub-"mission." If this was the task imposed on him, he certainly did not fulfil it, nor even attempt to fulfil it, for though, says Wilmot, "he at first hoped to persuade the fellows to comply with "the King's wishes, yet, when he heard the statement of the "case," that is, when he ascertained the true facts, "he was satis-"fied that they could not comply without a breach of their oaths, "and wrote a letter to the King on their behalf."

Again, when Mr. Macaulay says that Penn, having "too much "good feeling to approve of the violent and unjust proceedings "of the government" (wonderful admission!) "even ventured to "express part of what he thought," it would have been well to have stated what part of his thoughts he can have concealed. The fellows allege their oath as their excuse for disobedience, this excuse they represent to Penn, who boldly and plainly repeats it to the King. "Their case," he says, "was hard," "they could "not yield obedience without a breach of their oaths," "such "mandates were a force on conscience." "What more could "he or any one have said?" and what other of James's courtiers, who vied in his desertion and in fawning on his successor, when the "courtly Quaker" had courage to declare that the fallen monarch "had been his friend and his father's friend,"* would have dared to say as much?"

Next, as to the letter addressed to Bailey, and attributed to Penn: in the first place, there is no proof, or rather no probability, that this letter was his writing. It bears no signature, he never acknowledged any share in it, it is not alluded to as his by Hough in his account of the Windsor conference, and though Wilmot seems to suppose he never denied it, there is good reason to believe he did, inasmuch as the cotemporary copy of the proceedings in this case, preserved in the archives of Magdalen College, bears on the margin of this letter a manuscript memorandum, "Mr. Penn disowned this." Moreover, its very wording,

* Penn's Speech before the Lords of the Council, 1688: Life prefixed to Works, p. 139.

the terms "Sir and Majesty," are contrary to his notorious scruples and style of writing. Mr. Macaulay does indeed state, either on the authority of this anonymous epistle, or his own imagination, that "titles and phrases against which he had borne his "testimony dropped occasionally from his lips and his pen;" and possibly the fact that such phrases were inconsistent with his profession, and therefore with his sincerity, may be in Mr. Macaulay's mind reason why he should ascribe them to Penn; but as no other occasion is recorded in which they fell from him, and as no motive can be imagined for him to have thus belied the scruples of a life, for which he had so often suffered (nor indeed for him to conceal his name at all,) their use in this case would appear to be strong internal evidence against his authorship.

But even supposing that it is fair to charge him with the contents of this document, which plainly it is not, they by no means justify Mr. Macaulay's insinuations of "intimidation," attempts to "seduce the College from the path of right," to "frighten the "Magdalen men," &c.

So far from the letter having given such ideas to Dr. Bailey, he grounds his guess that it was Penn's on "its charitable pur- "pose" making it "seem to have been written by one who had "been already so kind as to appear on their behalf," and was "reported by all who knew him to employ much of his time in "doing good to mankind, and using his credit with his Majesty "to undeceive him in any wrong impression."

It is a pity Mr. Macaulay has not quoted this reply of Bailey: his readers could then have judged how far the impression he gives of Penn's conduct was that felt by the parties most interested.

Lastly, comes the final interview at Windsor, in Mr. Macaulay's account of which the incorrect notion given by his disregard of time and place is plain enough.

Any one of his readers would suppose that this interview was sought by Penn in performance of his office of seduction. "He "did not succeed in frightening the Magdalen men," so he "tried "a gentler tone," and accordingly "had an interview with "Hough," &c., and "began to hint at a compromise." Who would imagine, after reading such sentences as these, that this conference took place, not at the College, but at Windsor, a depu-

tation of the fellows going forty miles to see the Quaker, more than a month after the interview at Oxford, and six days after the date of Bailey's letter, in consequence of whose entreaty for his intercession it was probably held?

Nor are the distortions by Mr. Macaulay of Bishop Hough's report of this interview less evident.*

"Mr. Macaulay represents Penn as employed to solicit the "fellows; Dr. Hough represents the fellows as coming to solicit "him.

"Mr. Macaulay says that, after many professions of friendship, "Penn 'began to hint at a compromise;' Dr. Hough 'thanks "God he did not so much as offer at any proposal by way of "accommodation, which was the thing I most dreaded.'

"Mr. Macaulay makes his readers believe that the topics "urged by Penn were urged to persuade them to compromise; "Dr. Hough describes them as used to convince the fellows that "there was little hope of success from his intercession.

"Mr. Macaulay represents Penn as trying to overcome the "scruples of the fellows to the commission of perjury; Dr. Hough "represents him as admitting that the fellows gave satisfactory "answers to his 'objections.'

"Mr. Macaulay represents Penn as talking the merest drivel, "relying solely on James's moderation, and willing to give the "'Papists' two or three colleges in mere wanton injustice; Dr. "Hough (most unwillingly) shows that Penn thought the 'Papists' "had a right to two or three colleges, and believed they would "abstain from further demands because it would be dangerous "to ask for more.

"Mr. Macaulay describes the result of the interview as the "'breaking off of a negotiation' by the fellows; Dr. Hough de-"scribes it as the concession of a favour by Penn.

"In short, in every part of it, in general and in detail, no ver-"sion of the interview could be imagined or invented more re-"mote from the truth than that given by Mr. Macaulay. It is "true that when somebody mentioned the Bishop of Oxford's in-"disposition, Penn 'smiling' asked the fellows how they would

* These differences between the two writers are so clearly given in the critic previously alluded to (Tablet, March 10th, 1849,) that they hardly admit of alteration, and are therefore quoted at length in the text.

"like Hough to be made a Bishop. This remark, made as a "joke, answered by Mr. Cradock as a joke, and—even by Dr. "Hough, who answered it more seriously, not taken as an 'offer "at any proposal by way of accommodation'—this casual piece "of jocosity; picked out of a three hours' conversation; reported "by one interlocutor without the privity of the other; and, if "taken seriously, at variance with every other part of the con- "versation, and unconnected with its general tenor, is gravely "brought forward as a proof that a man otherwise honest, deli- "berately intended to use 'simony' as a bait to tempt a divine to "what both parties *knew* to be 'perjury.'

"If Mr. Macaulay were Crown counsel arguing for Penn's "conviction before a common jury, such a 'point' would be too "gross even for the license of the Old Bailey. But if this be "admitted as a canon, not of the venal advocate, but of the grave "historian, who, by virtue of his function, is bound to judicial "soberness and impartiality, God help the characters of all honest "men."

Before leaving this case, it may be well to quote Sewell's notice of it in his "History of the Quakers," in order that the reader may observe how completely Wilmot's account is confirmed, and Mr. Macaulay's contradicted, by an entirely independent narrator, who was, as Clarkson says, "then in correspondence with "Penn, knowing almost every thing relating to him as it hap- "pened, and who must have obtained his information from "sources quite distinct from Wilmot, none of the documents "quoted by the latter having been published till after his death."

"The King having thus granted liberty of conscience to people "of all persuasions," says Sewell,* "did whatever he could to "introduce Popery in England, for he permitted the Jesuits to "erect a College in the Savoy at London, and suffered the fryars "to go publickly in the dress of their monastical orders. This "was a very strange sight to Protestants in England, and it "caused no small fermentation in the minds of people, when the "fellows at Magdalen College, at Oxford, were by the King's "order dispossessed, to make way for Romanists. This was "such a gross usurpation, that W. Penn, who had ready access "to the King, and who endeavoured to get the penal laws and

* Sewell, p. 609.

"test abrogated, thinking it possible to find out a way, whereby "to limit the Papists so effectually that they should not be able "to prevail, did, for all that, not omit to blame this usurpation at "Oxford, and to tell the King, that it was an act which could "not in justice be defended; since the general liberty of con- "science did not allow of depriving any of their property, who "did what they ought to do, as the fellows of the said College "appeared to have done."

Objection might possibly be made to this testimony of Sewell, if taken by itself, though hardly with reason, inasmuch as his reputation for honesty as a historian is unquestioned, and his feeling as a Dutchman and a Protestant, in favour of William and his policy, and in opposition to James (abundantly shown in his work,) was such as would counteract any bias to which his Quakerism and friendship for Penn might expose him; but certainly, as corroborative evidence, such testimony is as indisputable as strong.

Surely, then, an examination into the true facts of this Oxford business makes it not unjust to Mr. Macaulay to assert, that his charges against Penn of "intimidation," of being a "broker in "simony of a peculiarly discreditable kind," of endeavours "to "tempt a divine to perjury," to "terrify or bribe" men to forsake "the path of right," are all groundless; that his statement, that even in the first instance he was employed by the Court, is unproved; and that the impression given, that he was its agent in the last and most important interview, is the very reverse of the truth, the requests for his intercession, which his reputation for "doing good to mankind," and honest struggles to "undeceive" the King, induced such men as Bailey to make to him, being construed, as in the case of Kiffin, into attempts on his part to seduce and efforts to frighten.

It would be hard to find any other history in which the very virtues of a man are thus twisted into grounds for the most injurious attacks upon his character.

But however unwarranted these attacks, this much must be allowed, that the tone of Hough's letter does give ground to believe that he regarded Penn with some suspicion, as a supposed supporter of the King's general policy, and possible participator in his designs against the interests of the Protestant Church. It

remains, therefore, to be considered how far this suspicion, which indeed forms the sole excuse for Mr. Macaulay's strictures, was justified—on what facts it was grounded, and whether these facts were in themselves discreditable or not. In order to reply to these questions, a few remarks respecting Penn's connection with the Court, and its cause, will be needed.

When James came to the throne, there were in the prisons of his kingdom about 1400* Quakers, more than 200 of them women, unoffending people, forced by the very tenets of that faith for which they suffered to be loyal subjects and peaceable citizens, whose sole alleged crime was their obedience to the voice of conscience. For this obedience, from the time they had first gathered together as a sect, each religious party, as it gained political sway, had measured its power by their persecution. As Penn said, when stating their wrongs to the Parliament of 1679, they had been as the "common whipping-stock of the kingdom: "all laws had been let loose upon them, as if the design had been, "not to reform, but to destroy them."

George Fox, their founder and leader, would have been qualified to draw up a report of the state of the gaols of the island, so universal and experimental was his acquaintance with them, and a sad list it would have shown of noisome holes and stifling dungeons, for those were days in which Prison Reform had been in truth but little agitated. More than 320† Quakers had died in confinement between 1660 and James's accession; at that very time many "were tending towards their destruction;" and very shortly before "several poor innocent tradesmen had been so suf- "focated by the closeness of Newgate, that they had been taken "out sick of a malignant fever, and had died in a few days."‡ Nor were their sufferings restricted to imprisonment: their meetings for worship were dispersed, their wives and daughters ill-treated, their goods spoiled, often "not a bed left to rest upon;" informers—hardened wretches, their own consciences long seared by sin—were set upon them, encouraged to turn their consciences to profit, to make merchandise of their misery. These blood-hounds of the law were the missionaries—sanguinary enactments

* Petition of Quakers to Parliament, 1685; Sewell, p. 588; and Petition to the King, id. p. 592.

† Petition, Sewell, p. 558.

‡ Croese, p. 101.

were the arguments employed in the conversion of the Quaker alike by cavalier parson and puritan preacher.

Few persecutions, indeed, have been more cruel or severe than that endured by the first generation of the "Friends," and in none have the patience and faithfulness of its victims been exceeded. History records no instance in which they, any one of them, denied or concealed their principles, or attempted to retaliate on their oppressors. Thus long and fiercely had the storm of bigotry raged against Penn's fellow-religionists, nor had he himself fled from its fury. Bravely had he borne up against it. Four times he had been imprisoned, twice sent to the tower; once at the instigation of the Bishop of London, he had, for writing a book in defence of his faith, been immured there in close confinement, none of his friends being allowed access to him: his father, the old Admiral, whose distaste to enthusiasm was almost equal to Mr. Macaulay's, managed to inform him "that the Bishop was "resolved he should either publicly recant or die a prisoner." "Tell my father," he replied, "that my prison shall be my grave "before I will budge a jot, for I owe my conscience to no mor- "tal man. I have no need to fear. God will make amends for "all!"*

Once, indeed, he did succeed in defeating the malice of his foes, when, after having been kept untried some months in Newgate, he was brought to the bar of the Old Bailey, and, thanks to his own ability and courage, was acquitted. That famous trial would alone explain the fact, which is so puzzling to Mr. Macaulay, the honour paid to his name by posterity, for it is hard to say how much of our present religious freedom is not due to a defence which so ably proved that the rights of conscience are inseparable from the civil liberties of a British citizen.†

But at length there was a ray of hope for this despised and persecuted people. The justice and mercy which had been denied

* Life prefixed to Works, p. 6.

† See "The People's Ancient and Just Liberties asserted in the trial of William Penn and William Mead, at the Old Bailey, September, 1670."—Works, vol. i. p. 7.—This trial, in fact, gave occasion to proceedings against Bushel, the foreman of the jury, in which Lord Chief Justice Vaughan pronounced his noble vindication of the right of jurors to deliver a free verdict, which by giving independence to juries, made the institution so effectual a protection to the liberty of the subject.—*See Bushel's Case, Vaughan's Reports*, p. 135.

to them, when demanded on public grounds, they had some reasons to look for as boons to private friendship, "for between the new "Sovereign and Penn there had long been a familiar acquaint-"ance."* The Admiral had, on his death-bed, besought the Duke of York to protect his son, and James had honestly fulfilled his promise to a beloved and faithful servant, and indeed had already shown his good will by procuring Penn's liberation from the Tower.†

The Quakers had therefore a friend at court, if he chose to use his influence, and most culpable would he have been if he had neglected to do so, seeing how much and for what purpose it was needed. Hence it was that he "became a courtier,"‡ and, so great was the affection and esteem of his Sovereign, "almost a "favourite. He was every day summoned from the gallery into "the closet, and sometimes had long audiences, while peers were "kept waiting in the ante-chambers. It was noised abroad that "he had more real power to help and hurt than many nobles who "filled high offices. He was soon surrounded by flatterers and "suppliants. His house at Kensington was sometimes thronged, "at his hour of rising, by more than 200 suitors." Mr. Macaulay quotes in his margin the passage in Croese's "Historia Qua-"keriania" describing these levees, but not explaining their cause. "When the carrying on these affairs required expenses at Court "for writings and drawing out of things into acts, copyings, fees, "and other moneys which are due, or at least are usually paid, "Penn," says Croese, "so discreetly managed matters, that out "of his own, which he had in abundance, he liberally discharged "all emergent expenses."§ No wonder that a courtier, who, in those days of universal and unblushing corruption, not only did not sell his influence, but actually paid out of his own pocket the expenses of his petitioners, had them rush in crowds to his gates.

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 506.

† Penn's Letter to Popple.

‡ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 506.

§ Croese, Cotemporary English Translation, book ii. p. 107. The Latin is as follows:—"At qui hic, cum magni in his negotiis sumptus essent faciendi, in aula, in curiis, pro scripturis, pro relationibus in acta, ex iisque repetitionibus, pro cerariis, pro cæteris pecuniis, quæ sic debent, et etsi non debent, tamen solent solvi. Pennus hæc omnia ita tractabat, ut *quemadmodum ei facultates abunde suppetebant, ita liberaliter ad omnia hæc sumptus faceret.*"—*Gerardi, Croesi, Historia Quakeriana*, lib. ii. p. 370.

This passage, which Mr. Macaulay does not quote, immediately follows one which he does, but, as it is scarcely reconcileable with the estimate his after remarks show him to have formed of Penn's conduct, it is not surprising that he makes no mention of it.

"The first use,"* however, "which he made of his credit"—his successful efforts to procure the liberation of the 1400 captive Quakers, he allows "to have been highly commendable." But this success did not and indeed could not satisfy him: his friends were pardoned by the King's mercy, but there was no security that the unjust laws which had imprisoned them would not be again enforced. Nor was it for the relief of his own persuasion alone that he laboured for the repeal of the penal laws, but in order to ensure to all his fellow-countrymen, permission to worship their God as they pleased. The fact is, he was an enthusiast in the cause of religious liberty: it was a cause for which, ever since he had arrived at manhood, he had been talking, writing, suffering.

"Freedom in things relating to conscience,"† was his petition to the Earl of Orrery, in his earliest letter on record, written in his twenty-third year; and three years after, when "a prisoner "for conscience sake in Newgate," he wrote his "Great Case of "Liberty of Conscience," claiming it as "the undoubted right" of all, "by the law of God, of nature, and of our own country."‡

These were rare notions in those days, when the virtue of bigotry was preached and practised alike by Independent, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian; when liberty to serve God their own way, and to force others to do the same, were the aims of each of the three great divisions of British Protestants. Especially did they all three agree in a firm belief in their duty to persecute the Papists. Catholics and Quakers, professing as it were the two extremes of Christianity, often met in the dungeon, and thus it was that, in 1678, when Churchmen and Dissenters forgot their mutual hatred in their frenzied fear of the Popish plot, they could yet spare some cruelty for the poor "Friends." The memory of the Marian persecution gives some ground, if not excuse, for their hatred of the Romanists, but why they should include the

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 508.

† Life prefixed to Works, p. 3.

‡ Penn's, vol. i. p. 443.

Quakers in their wrath it is hard to determine, unless indeed their avowed respect for the conscience even of a Papist was so unaccountable, that it could only be ascribed to a concealed adherence to his faith.

Hence possibly the reason that many of them, and Penn especially, were often called Papists—Jesuits in disguise. Nevertheless, spite of this prejudice, and at the very height of the anti-Popery fury, he yet, when protesting before a Committee of Parliament against the "injustice of whipping Quakers for Papists,"* ventured to add that he did not "think it fit that even Papists "should be whipt for their consciences, for such arguments," he said, "did not seem to him to be convincing, or indeed adequate "to the reason of mankind." Such words as these seem to us simple truisms, but those who have read Mr. Macaulay's vivid description of the Reign of Terror, resulting from the professed disclosures of the Popish Plot, will feel that only a man who feared God, and no one else, would have dared to speak them before the Parliament of 1678.

So then Penn might well say, in his letter to Popple,† "that "liberty of conscience is the first step to have a religion. This "is no new opinion with me. I have writ many apologies within "the last twenty years to defend it;" but he adds, as though anticipating the publication of Mr. Macaulay's History, yet "did I "never once think of promoting any sort of liberty of conscience "for any body which did not preserve the common Protestancy "of the kingdom and the ancient rights of the government; for "to say truth, the one cannot be maintained without the other."

This sentence recalls us to the question at issue. Did "his "enthusiasm for one great principle" in reality "impel him to "violate other great principles which he ought to have held sa-"cred?"‡ Did he, in his zeal for liberty of conscience, forget the liberties of the subject, or try to undermine the Protestant religion?

Fairly to consider this question, we must put ourselves in his position, and view the circumstances around him, not by the light which after events have cast upon them, but by that with which we should have seen them from his point of view.

His position was in truth a peculiar one. The faith in which

* Life prefixed to Works, vol. i. p. 118.

† Works, vol. i. p. 136. This letter was written October 24th, 1688.

‡ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 507.

the King was a sincere, though a superstitious believer, was a persecuted religion; to repeal, therefore, those penal laws, which, in punishing all want of conformity with the established Church, pressed so heavily on the Papists, became the object of his reign. The interests of his religion compelled him to appear at least to believe in the great principle of religious freedom: whether he did so in truth is certainly questionable. Mr. Macaulay takes great pains to show that he did not, that throughout he was at heart a bigot, wanting the power not the will to rekindle the fires of Smithfield. James's general character certainly does not disprove this charge, nor again, on the other side, do the facts of history prove it, for the persecutions of the Dissenters during the early part of his reign might have arisen not so much from religious as political hatred to the party which had sent his father to the scaffold and himself into exile, and was even then in actual rebellion or undisguised opposition against his prerogative. Probably his exact motives will never be ascertained, nor is it of importance that they should be; enough for our purpose, that Penn had good reason for giving faith to his professions, for, so far as his own experience went, he had proved their sincerity. "Whatever practices of Roman Catholics we might," he says, in his letter to Popple, "reasonably object against, and no doubt but "such there are, yet he (the King) has disclaimed and repre-"hended these ill things by his declared opinion against persecu-"tion, by the ease in which he actually indulges all Dissenters, "and by the confirmation he offers in Parliament for the security "of the Protestant religion and liberty of conscience. And in "his honour, as well as in my own defence, I am obliged in con-"science to say that he has ever declared to me, it was his opi-"nion, *and on all occasions when Duke, he never refused me the "repeated proofs of it*, as often as I had any poor sufferer for "conscience sake to solicit his help for."

But even had Penn doubted the King's word, which plainly *he* had no reason to do, he would have acted very foolishly not to have turned it to advantage, for his cause wanted all the help it could gain. By an accident, as it were, the ruling party was for him, but its tenure of power was uncertain, depending solely on the King's rule, and against him were combined the two great parties, between whom had hitherto alternated all political sway. The High Church Tory supported the penal laws, because he

thought it his duty to persecute both Papist and Puritan; the Puritan Whig wished indeed to repeal them for his own sect, but to continue them for the Catholic, for though now under oppression himself, the traditions of Quakers imprisoned during the Commonwealth, and still later of Catholics hunted to death at the cry of Oates and his pack of informers, were memories too pleasant to induce him to forego all hope of oppressing others. What, then, was the course for a man to take, who, like Penn, was anxious to secure to all his fellow-subjects the freedom which he claimed for himself? He could join neither of the parties in opposition; he knew them both too well; he himself owed a close confinement in the tower to a bishop, and not ten years before he had been forced to protest against laws made "by the Whig "Parliament" against Papists, but unjustly turned against his friends,* at which time also he would remember that the Puritans in New England had proved what he might expect from puritan rule, for "persecution," says Sewell, "being then (1677) hot in "Old England, it made those in New England the worse, inso- "much that they did not only whip the Quakers that were there, "but also some masters of ships that were no Quakers, only for "bringing some of that persuasion thither."† Plainly, then, his part was to do precisely what he did do, namely, first to support the King in his efforts to give present freedom of opinion, and then to do his utmost to secure this freedom for the future, by basing it not upon the caprice or life of the sovereign, but the firm foundation of a law secured by the concurrence of the people, expressed by Parliament. To gain this concurrence he struggled hard, by appealing to the common sense of the nation, and to the true interests of all parties, for doing which he reaped the unfailing reward of interference with prejudice, abuse from them all; but, though accused often enough by an "undiscerning "multitude of being a papist, nay, a jesuit,"‡ and suspected even by such men as Hough of a wish to subvert the Protestant Church, the one charge was as true as the other, and his assailants may be defied to produce evidence that he either advised or supported any attack by the King on the religion or rights or property of his subjects.

* Life prefixed to Works, vol. i. p. 117.
† Sewell, p. 567.
‡ Macaulay, vol. i. p. 506.

So far from desiring to supplant Protestant by Papal supremacy, his writings abundantly prove that he always felt and advocated the necessity of providing against the possibility of such change.

In a pamphlet* he published in 1679, he dwelt much on the distinction which their obedience to the foreign power of the Pope made between the Catholic and the Protestant Dissenter, and in 1687, during the heat of the ferment caused by the Royal measures, in his "Good Advice to the Church of England, "Roman Catholic, and Protestant Dissenter, in which it is "endeavoured to be made appear that it is their Duty, Principle, "and Interest, to abolish the Penal Laws and Tests,"† he declares positively that "a toleration, and no more, is that which "all Romanists ought to be satisfied with."‡ In fact, every word in his writings confirms the statement in Hough's letter, that though he was in advance of his age even so far as to conceive that the members of the Church of England should not alone be "capable of giving their children a learned education," yet he "always declared his opinion that the preferments of the Church "should not be put into any other hands but such as they at pre-"sent are in." Sewell's testimony to the same effect has already been quoted; viz., that though he "endeavoured to get the Penal "Laws and Test abrogated," he yet thought "it possible to find "out a way whereby to limit the Papists so effectually that they "should not be able to prevail."§

Nor even in that most difficult question of the Declaration of Indulgence can Penn's conduct fairly be blamed. That famous act, the persistance in which was the immediate cause of James's loss of his crown, may be designated as an attempt to attain a good end by bad means. The penal laws were a disgrace to the Statute-book, and a grievous oppression to many of his subjects. James suspended them, but without the consent of his Parliament, by a simple exertion of his prerogative. Liberty of conscience, therefore, was obtained by an unconstitutional encroachment on the liberty of the subject. It was received by the members of the Church, both lay and clerical, with universal terror and indignation; the Dissenters were divided as to its reception; some feared and suspected the giver too much to

* Project for the good of England. Works, vol. i., pp. 682 to 691.
† Works, vol. ii., p. 749. ‡ Idem, vol. ii., p. 768. § Idem, p. 606.

thank him for his boon, which others hailed, regardless of the motive which might have induced him to offer it. Penn was among the grateful ones. "Our sufferings," he said, in presenting the Quakers' address, "would have moved stones to compas-"sion, so we should be harder if we were not moved to grati-"tude."* For feeling and expressing this gratitude he incurs the reproach of Mr. Macaulay, but a little consideration will show how strange it would have been if he had acted otherwise. Mr. Macaulay himself acknowledges that when the King thus tried to bribe the Nonconformists to aid him, the Church suddenly became tolerant, and sought to outbid him,† offering them legal toleration, a Parliamentary indulgence, provided they would help to maintain the enactments against the Catholics. To many of the Dissenters the offer of the Church was the most tempting; their hatred to Rome, their suspicion of the King's sincerity, their distrust of his power, all induced them to accept it; but very different motives would influence Penn: his earnest desire was not to persecute but to tolerate the Papist; he had, as has been stated above, no ground to suspect the King, but he had good ground to fear the Church, for he had suffered from its power, and to suspect its offer, for he could not be sure that his friends would benefit by it. Cavaliers and Roundheads, Whig and Tory Parliaments, had each proved their hostility to the Quakers, how then could he trust that an act passed by an union between Whigs and Tories would not exclude his clients from relief? Can we then wonder that, to so uncertain a future hope, he preferred a certain present gain?

Surely, if Mr. Macaulay had recalled to his memory the vast difference which the Puritan persecution of the Quakers made, as he had himself previously shown,‡ between their position and that of the other Dissenters, he would not, in order to explain Penn's support of a measure which gave his friends the justice they could expect no where else, be compelled to imagine that "the life which he had been leading during two years had not a "little impaired his moral sensibility."§

Seeing, therefore, what was his experience of the mercy and justice of Parliaments—the laws which had been passed in the last reign, and that even during this, the petition to Parliament

* Sewell, p. 609.

† Macaulay, vol. ii., pp. 219 to 222.

‡ Macaulay, vol. i., p. 503.

§ Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 224.

for his captive brethren had been of no avail, while that to the King had resulted in their freedom, "his conscience" could scarcely have "reproached him"* if he had supported his Sovereign in his defence of the constitution, for what to him was a constitution which punished him for worshipping his God?

But even this he did not do: he not only did not uphold the King in any attempt to rule without the aid of Parliament, but, on the contrary, he throughout advised him against such a course. This fact is not alluded to by Mr. Macaulay, though twice stated by Sir James Mackintosh, to whose authority he generally pays the attention it deserves. "Penn," says Mackintosh,† quoting Johnstone's correspondence of 6th February, 1688, "desired a "Parliament, as the only mode of establishing toleration without "subverting the laws." Again he says, that after the second proclamation of the Declaration of Indulgence, (April, 1688,) he "desired a Parliament, from a hope that, if the convocation were "not too long delayed, it might produce a compromise, in which "the King might, for the time, be contented with an universal "toleration of worship."‡ The wording of the address he presented of the yearly meeting of Quakers confirms this view, inasmuch as, while thanking the King for his "Christian Declara- "tion for Liberty of Conscience," "it looks forward to such a "concurrence from Parliament as may secure it to their pos- "terity in after times."§ "'Tis plain, therefore," says Besse, in

* Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 224. † Mackintosh, p. 219. ‡ Idem, p. 241.

§ Life prefixed to Works, vol. i., p. 130. As this address is probably one of those which Mr. M. alludes to as "fulsomely servile," (vol. ii., p. 225,) it is here given, in order that the reader may judge how far this epithet is applicable.

THE ADDRESS.

To King JAMES the Second over *England*, &c.

The Humble and Grateful Acknowledgment of His Peaceable Subjects called QUAKERS, in this Kingdom.

From their usual Yearly Meeting in London, the Nineteenth Day of the Third Month, vulgarly called May, 1687.

We cannot but bless and praise the name of Almighty God, who hath the hearts of princes in his hand, that he hath inclined the King to hear the cries of his suffering subjects for conscience sake: And we rejoice that instead of troubling him with complaints of our sufferings, he hath given us so eminent an occasion to present him with our thanks: And since it hath pleased the King, out of his great compassion, thus to commiserate our afflicted condition, which hath so particularly appeared by his gracious proclamation and warrants last year, whereby twelve hundred prisoners were released from their severe imprisonments, and many others from spoil and ruin in their estates and properties; and his princely speech in

his Life, prefixed to Penn's Works, "they, the Quakers, grate-
"fully accepted of the suspension of the penal laws by the King's
"prerogative, (as who in their case would not?) a thing in itself
"just and reasonable, *in hopes of having the same* afterwards con-
"firmed by the legislative authority, there being at that time
"much talk of an approaching Parliament, and that *their expec-*
"*tation centred not in the King's dispensing power* is evident by
"our author's continuing his endeavours to show the necessity of
"abolishing the penal laws, for soon after this he writ a large
"tract, called 'Good Advice to the Church of England,'" &c.*

One word more about this Declaration of Indulgence: Mr. Macaulay says Penn tried to gain William's assent to it, "sent "copious disquisitions to the Hague, and even went there, in the "hope that his eloquence, of which he had a high opinion, would "prove irresistible."† All this is gratuitous assumption, for which indeed the author quotes Burnet, but had he read him, he would see that Penn's argument with the Prince‡ was about the abolition of the Test, and that the Declaration of Indulgence was not then named, nor is it mentioned till several pages afterwards,§ and had he condescended to glance at Clarkson's Life, he would have learnt that this journey to the Continent, which, by the way, was a religious mission to both Holland and Germany, was during the year 1686, while the Declaration, it is well known, was not in existence till April, 1687. Had he also observed the

council, and Christian declaration for liberty of conscience, in which he doth not only express his aversion to all force upon conscience, and grant all his dissenting subjects an ample liberty to worship God, in the way they are persuaded is most agreeable to his will, but gives them his Kingly word the same shall continue during his reign; we do (as our friends of this city have already done) render the King our humble, Christian, and thankful acknowledgments, not only in behalf of ourselves, but with respect to our friends throughout England and Wales. And pray God with all our hearts to bless and preserve thee, O King, and those under thee, in so good a work: And as we can assure the King it is well accepted in the several counties from whence we came, so we hope the good effects thereof, for the peace, trade, and prosperity of the kingdom, will produce such a concurrence from the Parliament, as may secure it to our posterity in after-times: And while we live, it shall be our endeavour (through God's grace) to demean ourselves, as in conscience to God, and duty to the King, we are oblig'd,

His peaceable, loving, and faithful subjects.

* Life prefixed to Works, vol. i., p. 131. (1726.)

† Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 234.

‡ Burnet's Own Times, vol. i., p. 693. (Ed. 1724.)

§ Idem, p. 714.

following passage, in one of those letters from Van Citters, the Dutch ambassador, from which he so often quotes, which proves that Penn's eloquence was exerted the year before the Declaration, and simply in regard to toleration, he would, though losing an opportunity for a sneer at the Quaker, have been saved from so glaring a chronological mistake:—"With regard to the point "of toleration," writes Van Citters, Westminster, $\frac{6 \text{ Dec.}}{26 \text{ Nov.}}$ 1686, "it "is reported here that both his Highness and my Lady the Prin- "cess have declared in favour of it, and that this will be reported "in the next Parliament, and that they have discoursed at length "thereon with the well-known Pen, the arch Quaker, who is "Governor of Pennsylvania, and have declared themselves to "this extent on that subject."*

The reader will now be able to judge how far the epithet "in- "temperate,"† applied by Mr. Macaulay to Penn's labours for religious liberty, is warranted by the history of his conduct. Not only does that history give no evidence that he abetted the Court in any act of cruelty or injustice, or conspired with it in any plot to rob the Church or establish tyranny, but it does give evidence that he opposed both such special acts and such general policy. His remonstrance with the King against his attempt to despoil

* "Aan Syn Hoogheyt et den Raedpensionaris Van Hollant.

Westminster den, $\frac{6 \text{ Dec.}}{26 \text{ Nov.}}$ 1686.

Aengaende het point der Tollerantie wert hier nu opently voorgegeven, dat soo syn Hoogheyt als Mevrouw de Princes haer daer voeren souden verclaert hebben, en dat men in het aenstaende Parlement dat mede soo debiteren zal, en dat hoogstgedaghte syn hoogheyt met den bekenden Pen die Archiquaecker, wie patron is van Pensilvania in America, daerover in 't lange soude gesproken hebben, en denselve hem dien aengaende diermaten, soude verclaert hebben."— *Van Citters' Letter, Dutch Archives.*

† Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 241. This charge of intemperance had been made against Penn in his life-time, and his spirited defence is worth quoting:—Some "nameless author had charged him with showing in the late reign an intemperate zeal for a boundless liberty of conscience. Not more intemperate," he replied, "in the reign that favoured it than in the reign I contended with that did not favour it. And no man but a persecutor, which I count a beast of prey, and a declared enemy to mankind, can, without great injustice or ingratitude, reproach that part I had in King James's court; for I think I may say without vanity, upon this provocation, I endeavoured at least to do some good, at my own cost, and would have been glad to have done more. I am very sure I intended, and I think I did harm to none, neither parties nor private persons, my own family excepted, for which I doubt not the author's pardon, since he shows himself so little concerned for the master of it."—Life prefixed to Works, p. 142.

Magdalen College has been stated above—his desire that he should not dispense with Parliament has just been mentioned. Johnstone, moreover, in his Correspondence,* expressly states that he advised against the most despotic of James's deeds, that order to the clergy to read the Declaration, which resulted in the committal of the Bishops to the Tower; and, as to his general policy, we have in his favour the testimony of two most unexceptionable authorities, both of them cotemporary, and both devoted to the Protestant cause. Lord Clarendon informs us, in his Diary,† that he laboured to thwart the Jesuitical influence that predominated in James's reign, and of this there is most full confirmation in a letter from Van Citters, deposited in the State Paper Archives at the Hague, in which he writes to the Prince of Orange as follows:—"One of these days the well-known Arch Quaker Penn "had a long interview with the King, and, as he has told one of "his friends, has, he thinks, shown to the King that the Parlia- "ment would never consent to the revocation of the Test and "Penal Laws, and that he never would get a Parliament to his "mind so long as he would not go to work with greater modera- "tion, and drive away from his presence, or at least not listen to "these immoderate Jesuits, and other Papists, who surround him "daily, and whose immoderate advice he now follows."‡

This letter was written some time after the proclamation of the indulgence (July, 1687,) by a man whose business it was to learn the character and sentiments of every person of influence in the

* Johnstone, 23d May, 1688. This is another fact, which, though quoted by Sir James Mackintosh (p. 241,) is not adverted to by Mr. Macaulay. See also another "cotemporary authority, in Mr. Lawton's Memoir of William Penn, in Mem. Pen. Hist. Soc., vol, iii. part ii., pages 230, 231," quoted in Bancroft's Hist. of United States, vol. ii., p. 397 n.: "Penn was against the commitment of the Bishops." "He pressed the King exceedingly to set them at liberty"

† June 23, 1688.

‡ "Aan Syn Hoogheyt & Raedpensionaris van Hollant.

Windsor den, $\frac{29}{19}$ July, 1687.

Dezer dagen was den bekenden Archiquaecker Pen zeer lange by den Coning, en soo hy aen een syner vrienden verhaelt heeft soude, soo hy meynt, aen S. M. vertoont hebben, dat het Parlement noyt tot vernietieginge van den Test en Poenale Wetten sal willen verstaen ook noyt een Parlement tot syn sin krygen, soo hy met geen meerder moderatie wil te werk gaen en van hem eloigneren, immers soo verre geen gehoor geven, die immoderate Jesuyten en Andere Papisten die dagelyks om hem zyn en wiens immoderate Concilia hy nu opvolgt."—*Van Citters' Letter, Dutch Archives.*

Court, and who had the best opportunity for getting at the truth; and it is therefore somewhat strange that Mr. Macaulay, though he acknowledges* the great assistance he has obtained from the perusal of his despatches, has so entirely neglected in this case also to make use of the information they afford.

If, then, truth-telling loyalty to his Sovereign, and honest gratitude to his benefactor — if earnest endeavours to rescue his brethren from oppression, and to free the consciences of his fellow subjects, were acts of intemperance, then was Penn's conduct "intemperate" evidence that a Court had "impaired his moral "sensibility;" and if the preaching of principles which were not practised, because too pure for his age, was a folly, then did his political life give "proof that he was not a man of strong sense;" but if such be Mr. Macaulay's rule of judgment, he must excuse his readers if they apply it to himself. The temptation is irresistible to appeal from the historian to the politician, and to ask him whether "his conscience reproaches" him for his eloquence in behalf of freedom of thought — whether he looks back with regret, as upon youthful indiscretions, upon any attempts which he may have made to aid his country in its progress—to improve the imperfect present by holding out the ideal future?

True it is that Penn's efforts were unsuccessful—that the King, turning a deaf ear to his counsel, was hurled from his throne—that Catholic and Dissenter, disregarding his "Good Advice," his "Persuasive to Moderation," riveted each of them his own chains in striving to fasten them on the neck of the other, and so the one kept his Penal Laws and the other his Test Act, and for a time Penn's policy was a failure, or rather its accomplishment was delayed—until, by abolishing the Test and emancipating the Catholics, Mr. Macaulay and his friends succeeded in putting his theories into practice.

Yes, strange as it may seem, to fulfil the visions of that vain foolish Quaker have been, ever since his death, the aim, the glory, of our best and wisest statesmen. Like as the citizens of Philadelphia are even now building the streets which he planned on the unpeopled waste, so are the workmen in the temple of freedom yet labouring at the design which he sketched out. Possibly his notions were dreams, but if so, they were at least dreams

* Macaulay, vol. i., p. 440.

which Mr. Macaulay would be proud to be told he had spent his political life in the effort to realize.

There now remains for notice only one charge, or rather one statement needing examination—for it can scarcely be considered a charge—viz., the assertion, that "the Friends" disapproved of his conduct, that "even his own sect looked coldly on him, and "requited his services with obloquy."* Whether this statement be a fact or not is a matter of but little importance, for Quakers not being infallible, their good opinion of a line of policy is by no means necessary for its defence. It certainly is not improbable that Penn may have had "notions more correct than were in his "day common," even among "the Friends," and that they also may have paid to his superior enlightenment its usual reward of obloquy, but, for their credit more than his, it is but fair to state that this assertion also is carelessly if not groundlessly made.

Mr. Macaulay's authority is Gerard Croese, but he, it must be remembered, did not belong to the Quakers himself, nor has his book ever been acknowledged by them as a fair and exact history, and therefore his testimony as to the opinion of their sect is of no value, compared with that of their own accredited historians, Sewell, Besse, and Gough.† The favourable sentiments of the two first-named of these writers, whose means of getting information were far superior to any Croese can have possessed, have already been quoted, and Gough writes to the same effect; and, indeed, Mr. Macaulay would not, it may confidently be stated, be able to find, either in the records of the Society of Friends, or in any work allowed to be a fair expression of its views, or in the journals of any of its leading members, any passage which would support his insinuation, but, on the contrary, Penn is in these documents always spoken of in terms which prove that the "society of which he was a member" loved and respected him, or, interpreting their sober reverence into Mr. Macaulay's bold and somewhat exaggerated language, "honoured "him as an apostle."

It is possible, indeed, that, inasmuch as the early Friends looked upon themselves as a peculiar people set apart to be the special servants of Him whose kingdom is not of this world, some of them may have looked with uneasiness on his exertions in the

* Macaulay, vol. i. p. 506.

† Gough's History of the Quakers, vol. iii. p. 179; vol. iv. pp. 177 to 179.

service of his country; but even of such uneasiness there is no sufficient proof, and had there been, his character would be no ways affected. Enough, that the form of his religion, his feelings as a Quaker, did not seem to him to interfere with the fulfilment of his duty as a citizen. Had it done so, that form would have been changed rather than his work left undone, for he was not a man who could make one duty an excuse for shirking another: within his conscience there was no conflict between the claims of religion and patriotism: he did not fly from the world, but faced it with true words and true deeds, as one who, as he said himself when, during the storm of persecution, he rebuked a powerful persecutor, "was above the fear of man, whose breath "is in his nostrils, and must one day come to judgment, because "he only feared the living God, that made the heavens and the "earth."* This reverential fear of God—this it was that made him fearless of man, that gave him "integrity" to "stand firm "against obloquy and persecution," and not against them alone, but gave him power over himself, strength to resist temptations from within as well as to sustain violence from without; for it must be borne in mind, that he was not one of those who take to piety only when wearied of pleasure, ceasing to pluck the rose because they have been pricked by its thorns. This "strong sense "of religious duty" was not his because his other senses were weak, or because he had satiated them; nor did he refrain from enlisting himself in the service of God till he had proved Mammon to be a hard master, but, in the strength of his passions, he controlled them: in the spring-time of life, when the prizes of pleasure and ambition were before him, he chose the path of self-denial, and walked in it to the end. Hear his own simple and touching account of the experiences of his youth, as he thought it right to relate them to some God-fearing men whom he met with in his travels, in order, as he said, that "those who were "come to any measure of a divine sense" might be "as looking-"glasses to each other, as face answereth face in a glass."† "Here I began to let them know," he says, "how and when the "Lord first appeared unto me (anno 1656,) which was about the "twelfth year of my age; how at times, betwixt that and the fif-

* Letter to Vice Chancellor of Oxford: Works, vol. i. p. 155.

† Life prefixed to Works, p. 92.

"teenth, the Lord visited me, and the divine impressions he gave "me of himself; of my persecution at Oxford, and how the Lord "sustained me in the midst of that hellish darkness and debauch- "ery; of my being banished the College; the bitter usage I un- "derwent when I returned to my father: whipping, beating, and "turning out of doors in 1662; of the Lord's dealings with me "in France, and in the time of the Great Plague in London: in "fine, the deep sense he gave me of the vanity of this world, of "the irreligiousness of the religions of it. Then, of my mournful "and bitter cries to him, that he would show me His own way "of life and salvation, and my resolutions to follow him, whatever "reproaches or sufferings should attend me, and that with great "reverence and brokenness of spirit. How, after all this, the "glory of the world overtook me, and I was even ready to give "up myself unto it, seeing as yet no such thing as the Primitive "Spirit and Church on the earth, and being ready to faint con- "cerning my hope of the restitution of all things," had not "at "this time the Lord visited me with a certain sound and testi- "mony of His eternal word, through one of these the world calls "Quakers, namely, Thomas Loe." And then "I related to them "the bitter mockings and scornings that fell upon me, the dis- "pleasure of my parents, the invectiveness and cruelty of the "priests, the strangeness of all my companions; what a sign and "wonder they made of me; but above all, that great cross of "resisting and watching against mine own inward vain affections "and thoughts."

And this son of a courtier, who thus preferred a prison to a court—who chose as the companions of his youth, men, whose very name was a byeword of scorn,* who until his forty-first year had led a life of consistent self-control, and proved his sincerity by his sufferings and sacrifices, can it be believed that he could have thus suddenly found his "resolution give way," even though "courtly smiles and female blandishments" had been "offered" as "bribes to his vanity?"

* "A Quaker," or "some very melancholy thing," Pepys describes him in his Diary (December 29, 1667), on his return from Ireland. "A very pleasant fact, to Pepys, who hated the Admiral, and rejoiced in his perplexities at his son's religion, but, doubtless, in his eyes, a strange fancy to be taken by the youth, who, three years before (Diary, August 16, 1664), "had come back from France a most modish person, grown, my wife says, a fine gentleman."

Mr. Macaulay's faith in human virtue must indeed have been sorely tried—his estimate of the strength of religious duty must be but slight—or, instead of suspecting "the eminent virtues of "such a man," he would have questioned the probability of so strange a fall. But, like most men who are over-doubting in one direction, he is too believing in another, for, if he has little faith in the truth of Penn's professions, he has at least a firm confidence in the certainty of his own suspicions—if he be sceptical of virtue, he compensates for it by being credulous of vice; and so, if he refuses to listen to the concurrent testimony of "rival "nations and hostile sects," he yet gives full credence to the insinuations of party prejudice, and makes up for his disbelief in the general estimate of Penn's character by an admission of charges, respecting which it is hard to discover the facts of which they are the distortion.

But the voice of history cannot be thus silenced: she has already recorded her judgment, from which there is no appeal; nor should Mr. Macaulay cavil at its justice, for, strange as it may seem to him, there is in it no mystery.

This Quaker was a strong and a brave, and therefore a free man: he ruled himself, and fearing God, feared no other; and so he made posterity his debtor, for, that spirit which won freedom for himself, he left to it as a legacy, and there is no fear that the debt due to him will be unpaid, so long as the inheritance remains.

The memory of good men is sacred: we treasure it, as we value our safety in the present—our hope for the future, for, on what, after all, depends our national freedom, of which Mr. Macaulay so often and so loudly vaunts?—most assuredly not, as he would seem to think,* on the limitations of the prerogative of our rulers, handed down to us from our ancestors, but on that spirit of individual justice, which, inasmuch as it breathed in their hearts, made that freedom both possible and necessary, of the strength whereof these limitations were and are the exact measure. It is not to the fact that for ages past Englishmen have had the habit of preventing their kings from taking their money, or making or breaking laws at their pleasure, that they owe what

* Macaulay, vol. i., chap. 1.

liberties they possess. These "three great constitutional prin-"ciples,"* as Mr. Macaulay calls them, are indeed the signs of our freedom, their prevalence has been the measure of its growth, but to suppose them to be its origin is to commit the absurdity of taking the effect for the cause. Individual self-government, that alone is the cause of national freedom — the source and guarantee of the liberty of the subject — for that alone makes personal liberty compatible with social order; and of this power of self-control, the force whereof gauges the freedom of all governments, and without which all constitutions — yes, even the "glorious constitution of 1688" — are mere waste-paper, of this power the highest possible ideal is "a strong sense of religious "duty."

Alas, then, for our liberties, if ever, as a nation, we follow the example of Mr. Macaulay, and reverence, in place of this spirit, those forms which are but its expression, for then indeed will they become to us a mockery and a stumbling-block, but until we do so, there is no fear that we shall forget that "for the authority of "law, for the security of property, for the peace of our streets, "for the happiness of our homes, our gratitude is due," not alone "to the Long Parliament, to the Convention, and to William of "Orange,"† — to them indeed, but if to them, then also to that "mythical person," whose life, grotesque as may have been its garb, was, more than that of any politician of his day, the incarnation of this spirit of self-control, and whose words and deeds yet dwell within our memories as witnesses of its power.

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* Macaulay, vol. i., p. 29. † Macaulay, concluding paragraph of vol. ii.

THE END.

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